



Washington Weekly Brief

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On the Hill

Here's what we're tracking this week for EUCOM.

Bills of Interest:

HR 2003 - Ethiopia Democracy and Accountability Act of 2007

- This bill would encourage and facilitate consolidation of security, human rights, democracy, and economic freedom in Ethiopia. This would include counter terrorism and counter narcotics efforts.
- This bill was introduced in the House and referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.
- This bill was received in the Senate and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations, after passage in the House on October 3.

HR 2228 - Ethiopia Freedom, Democracy and Human Rights Bill

- Closely related to HR 2003 this bill would also encourage the development of Ethiopia while also implementing counter terrorism and counter narcotics efforts.
- This bill was introduced in the House and referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

HR 2446 - Afghanistan Freedom and Security Support Act of 2007

- This bill provides funding for programs to stabilize Afghanistan and counter the drug trade.
- This bill passed the House and was sent to the Senate, which referred it to the Committee on Foreign Relations. Star Print ordered July 17, 2007.

S 3001 - National Defense Authorization Act of 2009 (House version)

- This bill authorizes military activities and programs and DoD-wide programs for 2009.
- The bill was passed by both House and Senate committees, and sent to the White House for Presidential signature September 27, 2008.
- Became Public Law No 110-417 with President Bush's signature on October 14th.

HR 2638 - Department of Defense Appropriations Act of 2009

- This bill authorizes Department of Defense activities and programs for FY 2009.
- The bill was attached to the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act of 2008 to continue appropriations for Department of Defense activities and programs that would be covered by the regular fiscal year 2009 appropriations bills.
- Became Public Law No: 110-329 on September 30, 2008.

Hearings of Interest:

There are no hearings of interest scheduled for this week.

INSIDE THE BELTWAY

Hill staffers talk about future agenda items... Senior Democratic Senate staff addressed a meeting of associations focused on criminal justice policy last week and gave a forecast of issues that will receive attention in 2009. In terms of legislation, staff expected juvenile justice, violent crime, DNA/forensics, crime prevention, and white collar crime issues to be priorities. In terms of oversight, expect committees to look at the most cost-effective ways of dealing with crime. Also expect a serious look at Department of Justice structure and function - and that includes the justice assistance components. Committees will continue this past year's focus on how DOJ grants are evaluated and awarded. The staffers predicted that DOJ reorganization will happen in some form - whether legislatively or through internal orders. The Department of Justice legislative authorization expires next year, so any legislative

reorganization could occur through the reauthorization vehicle. One emerging theme is “violent crime partnerships”. Another is “streamlining” DOJ and DHS assistance funding. Expect the new administration and Congress to look for efficiencies among the programs and to shift resources around - and possibly even re-align DHS and DOJ grant programs to become more complementary.

Inside the new administration... The Obama-Biden transition team is working 24/7 on both personnel and policy planning. One transition staffer working under Biden last week suggested that the transition team will be reaching out to stakeholders over the next two months for perspectives and recommendations on different issues. Expressing the frustration of groups that have had very challenging times trying to get messages up through the ranks of the Bush administration, the staffer also indicated that this outreach will continue into the new administration itself. Separately, one interesting suggestion has been gaining interest: some groups may call for a new Presidential Crime Commission to outline what the criminal justice community has learned over the past 20 years and what remains to be determined in terms of “what works” in public safety and criminal justice. This proposal - if made - could find a receptive White House, especially in light of the announcement that Melody Barnes will be the head of the Domestic Policy Council in the Obama White House. Barnes will be in charge of coordinating all of Obama’s domestic policy initiatives. She served as counsel to Sen. Ted Kennedy on the Judiciary Committee for eight years and has a deep background on these issues. Expect criminal justice groups to discuss a call for a new commission over the next two months.

TOPICS OF INTEREST

Maritime Piracy is the threat de jour. With the seizure of the Saudi oil tanker *Sirius Star* by Somali bandits, the sinking of a pirate ‘mother ship’ by the Indian Navy and two additional high-profile hijackings, piracy is dominating headlines. While maritime piracy is certainly a major concern, the impact on other threat issues and security policy-making engines needs attention. Furthermore, scenarios, actions and consequences regarding piracy along the Horn may serve as a valuable precedent for other maritime issues along West Africa, the Gulf of Guinea and most importantly, the Eastern Mediterranean. Thus far, the most spectacular pirate attacks have occurred off the coast of Somalia, around the Horn of African and the Gulf of Aden. This sector serves as a main conduit for commerce and energy transfer between the Middle East, the Mediterranean, the Indian Sub-Continent and parts of both South East and Southwest Asia. In short, the importance of this corridor, and maintaining its security, cannot be disputed. Even though East African coastal regions have born the brunt of offshore criminality, the Mediterranean Sea and the West African Gulf of Guinea remain vulnerable to these threats as well. The Eastern Mediterranean is important to consider in terms of Mediterranean commerce, but also because of instability in the Levant; especially given Al-Qaeda’s recent history of maritime terrorism. The Gulf of Guinea, the location of both major energy supplies and substantial narcotics trafficking, has not only seen its share of piracy but also suffers from a maritime and coastal-based oil insurgency. While recent multinational efforts to address the piracy problem have been put to work, maritime brigands have managed to continue operations...in some cases in even bolder and bolder ways. The hijacking of the *Sirius Star* was the farthest out that pirates have executed an attack so far; the tanker was taken over 400 nautical miles out from the Kenyan port of Mombasa. The piracy trend is worth tracking for a number of reasons. Not only is African piracy inextricably linked with other security issues on the continent (the multi-faceted Somali insurgency and possible connections to Al-Qaeda affiliate groups) but many of the same protective principles applied to combat piracy easily transpose to other security areas as well...drugs and human-trafficking stand atop this list. Piracy is also important simply because it reaffirms the cunning ability of various underground and asymmetric groups to adapt, coordinate and execute attacks even in the face of increased maritime pressure and defense. From a policy-making perspective, it will be important to recognize the impact that increased anti-piracy campaigns may have on other security efforts...particularly the counter-narcotics realm. In the face of growing concerns for

energy and commerce security, if high-profile piracy incidents continue to occur, a shift in policy-making focus may result. With a floundering economy and budgets already tight, tapping the resources and funding for other areas, like counter-narcotics, to support greater anti-piracy efforts is a potential outcome. The economic impacts caused by piracy are considerable and may also help to quicken the pace of anti-piracy efforts and or force. For example, ships are now making the extended journey around the Cape of Good Hope just to avoid the lawless Gulf of Aden. In the case of the Sirius Star, as of Thursday the 20th, pirates demanded \$25 million USD in ransom for the crew; sources indicate they've given the Saudi government ten days to comply. The amount of pirate attacks are roughly triple that in 2007, with over 90 ships being assaulted. 18 hijacked ships are still being held. TCG will stay remain on watch in the Crow's Nest.

Selected News for EUCOM

- [Military reform a must in coup-prone Guinea-Bissau](#)
- [Drug smuggler shot to death on the Israel-Egypt border](#)
- [Liberia Fights Growing Illegal Drug Trade](#)
- [Afghanistan finds a fruitful way for farmers to beat deadly opium trade](#)
- [Workshop to counter drug trafficking held](#)

The Lighter Side

[Quote of the Week](#)

“Against the assault of laughter, nothing can stand.”

~Mark Twain

“America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves.”

~President Abraham Lincoln

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